

The New Spartans
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Summary: With the war almost at an end, ONI decides it should continue its latest project: the Spartan Mark V Project. Welcome to Lima Squad. -Vignette- -Read & Review please- -No flaming- Should I continue this fanfic?

1. Disclaimer

DISCLAIMER:

I DO NOT OWN HALO. IT BELONGS TO BUNGIE AND 343 INDUSTRY.

I DO OWN THE ORIGINAL CHARACTERS; ***CPO JACK OLEN, DOCTOR FIMLY, MARK, TYLER, HALEY, VICTORIA & RICO, NEW RAGNI***** AND WHATEVER ELSE IS NOT FOUND IN THE HALOVERSE.**

RATED **_MA**_** FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS:**

1. LANGUAGE; LOTS OF PROFANITY

2. BLOOD, GORE, EXPLICIT DETAIL, ETCâ€|

3. ANYTHING ELSE THAT MAY FALL UNDER THE **_MA**_** RATING (possibly if I decide to do more than just this vignette)**

Please Read & Review. No flaming though thank you :3

Throughout the story you may encounter military acronyms. I will post only a few. The rest you may look up via the internet.

CPO- Chief Petty Officer

AOI- Area of Interest

LKP- Last Known Position (I don't know if this is even real but it works)

MIA- Missing In Action

KIA- Killed In Action

2. Spartan: Lima

The New Spartans

Halo Fanfic

By Riku Yasuka

Chapter One

Spartan: Lima

"Too slow!" The Petty Officer shouted out at his five recruits. "Do you expect to survive out in the war zone or die on the way down?" He asked them. The recruits were nothing but children all under the age of ten, three boys and two girls.

"Sorry sir!" The kids said out in unison, standing at attention and saluting their CO. He looked each of them over carefully from right to left. They were in line in a mix-match fashion; boy, girl, boy girl and each stood roughly around the same height of five-foot, three-inches.

"You're dismissed for today." The Petty Officer told them before pivoting on his left heel and walking off towards his office where he saw three people waiting for him. The recruits caught a quick glance of who their CO was going to meet before they took off running the opposite way back to their barracks.

"Good day to you Chief Petty Officer Olen." The female greeted him as she saw him walk up to her and her two marine escorts. CPO Olen returned her kind greeting with a dead-eye glare as he opened his door and walked into his office. His office was small but he liked it. It had all the necessities for him like a steel desk and black suede office chair behind it, five bookshelves lining the walls and one main window behind his chair overlooking the garden outside. The color scheme was UNSC basic: bland steel grey and grey linoleum flooring, a request of his. He walked around the right side of his desk and took a seat in the chair, staring at the girl and her two escorts as they walked in behind him while his computer monitor flashed for him, signaling he had new mail.

"Marines, you are relieved. Return to your previous duties." CPO Olen ordered the men. Both marines snapped to attention and saluted then walked out the door briskly. "Shut the door then have a seat." He said to the woman, gesturing to the chair that was positioned right in front of him on the other side of his desk.

"Thank you Chief Petty Officer." She replied shutting the wooden door and sauntering over to the black short back chair. CPO Olen watched her every movement; from the way she took each step in stride proudly and confidently to the rhythmic way her hips popped from side-to-side and how her long legs added to her overall elegance. It was no secret that CPO Olen had a thing for this girl but due to business he had to

keep in mind they were there to be professional.

"So what may I accommodate you with today, Doctor Fimly?" CPO Olen asked her as she sat down and crossed her left leg over her right, the tip of her red stiletto catching his attention before it hid below the top of the desk. Doctor Fimly pulled her white lab coat over the front of her person, hiding the red tee-shirt and black dress pants before crossing her arms against her chest and brushing a lock of her natural blonde hair out of her baby blue eyes.

"I am here to check up on your new recruits." Doctor Fimly answered CPO Olen.

"I see." CPO Olen said nodding his head and resting his elbows on the desk. He was a gruff middle-aged man of African-American descent, had a military cut hairstyle, piercing blue eyes and was clean-shaven with a superficial scar that followed the length of his lower lip. He wore the standard UNSC officer garbs; powder grey top & pants with black combat boots, the left breast of his shirt decorated with colored bars representing the medals he had earned in his active duty days. "Well it has only been six weeks since I received them, Sarah." He told her looking at his monitor and typing away at the keyboard, reading over the new e-mail and replying all the same.

"Yes I am aware that it has been just a little over a month now Jack, but I am following protocol." She replied back in an uneasy tone of voice. She didn't like interrupting CPO Olen and his duties as it was already but it made her all the more uncomfortable when she had to interrupt him due to ONI protocols and other military regulations. "If you wouldn't mind giving me a quick summary of them and your suggestions I can be on my way and you as well."

"Summary and my suggestions? If you say so." He answered her back sending his finished message, sighing when he saw the newest message that was just sent to him a minute ago. He didn't like the subject title of it already. "Sarah, the five new recruits are all excellent in their fields, even for only being ten." He began, opening the message he was disliking already.

"Okay so what do you want to see happen with them now?" Sarah asked him getting cut off in mid sentence.

"I want to see Mark become a leader." Jack suggested to Sarah as he read over the last portion of the e-mail. "I hate this job sometimes." He made comment before looking back at Sarah, his attention back on her completely. "But to do that Mark and the other four all need to cooperate better, Sarah."

"Jack, they're children they are going to act like children do." Sarah tried to tell him, her motherly side coming out.

"And they are going to be Spartans are they not? Spartans, Sarah, do not act like insubordinates; they act like a team." Jack retorted.

"Okay I understand your point but even so they are still children."

"Sarah, you asked me my suggestions and I answered. Now on a related note, Haley and Victoria are both agile and flexible. They are an

inseparable pair so my suggestion is to keep them together at all costs, don't ever separate them." He told her. "Mark, Tyler and Rico all have one thing in common as well."

"Okay so I'll make sure to emphasize the inseperation of Victoria and Haley in my weekly report, but what is this common trait among the boys?" She asked Jack with interest now.

"They are all unrelenting. Sarah, as you will see in my reports as well as the documented field exercises you will see that this handful have far surpassed the last batch."

"I will see that for myself then Jack." Sarah said with a curt nod as she stood up. "I will be on my way now. I look forward to seeing your new recruits out in the field real soon."

"They will be as protocol directs Sarah. Good day." Jack dismissed returning to his computer. Sarah turned on her heel and walked to the door then out of it, closing it behind her. Jack sighed and shook his head. How he did not approve of such conflicts between himself and Sarah especially over such trivial matters like the potential Spartan V program recruits.

"Sometimes I hate this job and its entirety." He remarked to himself.

Five Years Later

"Three... Two... One." Mark counted off quietly to his teammate Tyler and himself. On the count of one Mark and Tyler both mantled over the fallen debris in their deep blue MJOLNIR armor and raised their DMRs to face. On their visors they targeted the threats that were in view: five Jackals, three of which were four-hundred meters away and obviously snipers, six blue Elites and three groups of Grunts, twelve altogether.

Tyler and Mark had stayed invisible up until now among the ruined city of New Ragni and the moment their visors alerted them that they were two-hundred meters from the Covenant checkpoint, took aim at the closest group of Grunts. Speaking through the coms in their helmets Mark spoke to Tyler.

"Still unaware of us. Wait for the patrol to pass by the fusion coils then light them up. Upon first contact find cover and wait for the snipers to drop."

"Copy that Mark. Let's do this already." Tyler responded fullhardy and filled with much anticipation. Mark was glad to have Tyler as his wingman and would have it no other way.

"On my signal." Mark spoke to Tyler. Both men stopped walking and crouched down, taking a knee behind a chunk of steel. The only thing that stood out of their presence were the scopes of their DMRs but even this would be hard to spot since the sun had since set and the sky now lit with twilight.

'_Blue Three to Blue leader, come in. Over._' A soft female's voice came over the channel. Mark naturally responded upon hearing his military mission codename.

"Blue leader to Blue Three, copy. Go ahead Haley."

'_Blue leader, Three and Four are en route. ETA approximately twenty minutes. What is the LZ? Over._' Haley, codenamed Blue Three, asked in response.

"LZ is still hot Blue Three. Intel miscalculated overall enemy force. Recommend ten minute break. Over."

"Mark, we have a problem. Two Phantoms just dropped in. Look." Tyler warned Mark since he had made his way to a more clear line of sight twenty meters to the east of Mark. Seeing an orange marker pop up on his HUD Mark crept over to Tyler's position, which was marked by a blue double triangle and looked at the landing zone that Tyler had pointed out. What Mark saw now made him bite his lip. The Phantoms not only dropped off six more groups of Grunts but also two Covenant tanks called Wraiths as well as six groups of Honor guard Elites.

"Blue Three, this is Blue leader. I am ordering your convoy to stand down and await further instruction. The situation has just gotten worse. Over."

'_Copy last Blue leader. Blue Three and Four convoy will halt advance and await further orders. Be careful out there Mark._'

"Blue leader to Blue Five, come in. Over." Mark called next over the team COM link.

'_Blue Five. Over._'

"Rico, situation has heated up. I repeat, LZ has gotten hotter. Acquire visual and copy last. Over."

Rico sighed hearing Mark tell him the LZ had gotten worse already so he stood up from his prone position into a crouched one and picked up his sniper rifle. He was more flustered now that he had to relocate from his vantage point that overlooked the LZ area as well as where the other Blue members were heading in from all because there was an apparent landing area that he did not see at all.

"_Blue leader, pass along coordinates to said AOI. Over._" Rico responded back through Mark's mic.

"Tyler, coordinates of that landing pad." Mark ordered, referring to the place where the Phantoms had just dropped off and left. Acting quickly Tyler pulled up a layout of the area in front of them and using the grid format, acquired the coordinates Mark asked of him for Rico.

"Coordinates are: Alpha, Tango, Whiskey, Niner, Niner, Tree." Tyler read off to Mark.

"Rico, coordinates are: Alpha, Tango, Whiskey," Mark read off clearly to Rico, "Niner, Niner, Tree. Copy last. Over."

'_Alpha, Tango, Whiskey....'_ Rico heard from Mark in his helmet. He quickly pulled up a map and grid of the area he could see, pinpointing the first three directives he received and followed them up with the last three given. '_Niner, Niner, Tree._' Rico stopped

surveying the land once his HUD pinpointed the entire coordinates. All he saw in his visual was an empty space where the supposed Covenant drop zone was to be located. This shot up a red flag with him immediately because he knew all too well that Mark and Tyler wouldn't make up such sightings or fake coordinates -not out on an actual mission anyways.

"Um Blue leader, coordinates are affirmative over. But visual is a negative. Copy last." Rico replied back to Mark as he stared at the empty area that Mark and Tyler both affirmed was indeed not empty at all.

"Is he kidding?" Tyler spat after hearing Rico respond by telling him and Mark that there was no visual on the drop zone but the coordinates were correct. Mark turned his head towards Tyler and had they not been wearing their helmets, Tyler would have seen Mark's glower. This bugged Mark as much as it did Tyler to hear that Rico did not have a visual on what was just reported in as being reinforcements he also did not let a second go by.

"Rico, what visual do you have? Over." Mark asked as he kept two Elites in his scope, following their patrol route while he knew Tyler was watching the reinforcements' movements now.

Rico laid back down in a prone position and steadied his rifle then looked through the scope out where he saw two blue double triangle markers, his teammates, and carefully looked over the area around them. What he saw was nothing but emptiness. He saw no patrols walking around or vehicles standing idly by. All Rico saw were his comrades hiding behind debris, completely out of view by any would-be enemies.

"Mark, I see nothing of the sort that you have reported in. I see no Covenant adversaries at all. Over." Rico said back to Mark. Just after he had responded to his team leader Rico's radar flashed yellow followed by throwing up a large splotch of red coming in from the west - from his left flank. Rotating his rifle and body to get a better view Rico watched as a medium-sized Covenant force march on towards the desolate space that was the LZ Blue team had been ordered to clear out and maintain. He bit his lip when he eyed the make up of the force.

"Shit. Mark, Mark you have incoming." He warned as he watched the platoon walk right into the space, disappearing within. "No way. Oh shit."

'Mark, I see nothing of the sort that you have reported in. I see no Covenant adversaries at all. Over.' Mark heard. Tyler, Haley, even Victoria all heard Rico's report and were all about to cuss up a storm until Mark and Tyler heard Rico warn them about more troops arriving.

"First, he tells us he has nothing. Now he tells us there are more Covenant waltzing on in?" Tyler spat about ready to cuss Rico out over the coms but also stopped when he saw more Wraiths roll on in. "Oh for the love of God. Mark, if Rico said he doesn't see shit here but he saw the new arrivals there-"

"-The Covenant are using a cloaking shield." Mark interrupted when he, too, saw the tanks. "Rico, change of plan. Be at the ready on my

signal." He barked, tapping Tyler's shoulder two times then creating red dots on his own and Tyler's HUD.

"Mark, we're gonna go in?" Tyler asked upon seeing the markers appear before his eyes.

"We have to Tyler. We have to get a visual on the cloaking towers and either light them up ourselves or for a fire mission." Mark answered Tyler back. Tyler let out a soft chuckle and nodded his head.

"Copy that. Let the games begin Mark." He said with a slight hint of deranged amusement in his voice. Mark grinned himself and raised his rifle backup.

"Blue Three, Blue Four and Blue Five standby for new orders." Mark spoke out over the COM link. "Blue Three and Four, convoys are to hold their position. Blue Five, be ready to open fire. I want rounds down range the moment the cloak is down. Copy last. Over."

'_Copy last Blue leader. Blue Three and Four with convoys will hold position until pathway is clear._' Haley responded.

'_Copy last Mark. Ready and willing._' Rico also replied. With that Mark switched off the safety to his gun, took aim at one of the fusion coils and smiled.

"Begin." He told Tyler, pulling the trigger of his DMR and releasing a single shot. The shot rang out and alerted the Covenant troops but by the time they had been alerted the fusion coil that had once been in Mark's scope now exploded into a ball of red and purple fire, throwing forth the two idle Elites as well as impaling them with hot metal shrapnel and purple blood. Tyler and Mark both ran out, firing at each target that came into sight while also feeling plasma graze their armor. On his visor Mark watched as his shield bar depleted slowly with each taken hit. No longer capable of hiding behind debris Tyler and Mark now fire openly at whatever moved. Each shot fired dropped two Grunts and for every five bullets Tyler and Mark dropped three Elites or more; several more fusion coils igniting and sending Grunts to oblivion when their methane tanks caught and exploded too.

"Reloading!" Tyler yelled out hiding behind a tall, purple-copper colored weapon crate. Also hiding behind a similar crate Mark heard Tyler's call out of reloading and tossed a fragmentation grenade overhead. It exploded and the sounds of Grunts dying told him it had done some good.

"Ideas now Mark?" Tyler asked on the mic, crouching and twisting out of cover to open fire with a fresh clip in his DMR. Mark also spun out of cover and opened fire until his clip was dry. He reloaded quickly and continued firing while he also looked for any signs of a tower or something that could be powering the cloaking field.

"Just one." Mark replied as he watched an Elite skid to its knees then hit the ground from a headshot by Tyler.

"Which would be?" Tyler asked reloading and taking down three more Elites, seeing how quickly they were beginning to get overrun by the sheer numbers of the Covenant occupation.

"Take cover." Mark yelled rolling to the side, just barely missing a large green plasma flare that hit the spot where he just stood and explode creating a small crater.

"Fuel rods? Fuck me!" Tyler cussed hiding back behind his cover. "Any visual on those damn towers yet?" He asked Mark since he saw Mark running to find cover, evading more fuel rod rounds in the process.

"Not yet but I'm trying Tyler. See if you can find them too. I think we're facing a battalion here!" Mark screamed back, popping six Grunts in the face, dropping them quickly before he threw two more grenades out at the Grunts carrying the fuel rod cannons. One of his rounds had struck the cannon itself and sent it, the Grunt that carried it and the other four Grunts all up in a green flame that acted much like a domino effect as the initial blast caused the other fuel rods to explode which then caught several Elites and killed them too.

"Shit. You had to go and exaggerate!" Tyler yelled back out, hinting at a joke which Mark caught and laughed as he down four more Grunts and three more Elites.

"Blue leader to Command. Over." Mark called out as he ducked down behind cover to reload and let his shield recharge since he had nearly lost it and by the warning alarm, knew he could have easily been injured had he stayed another second in the open.

'_Command to Blue leader copy. Over._'

"Sir, I need a fire mission ASAP." Mark ordered in response, opening fire once more to keep the adversaries at bay for the time being.

'_Copy that Blue leader. Fire mission. Coordinates?_'

"Alpha, Tango, Whiskey... Niner, Niner, Tree." Mark called in, running at an Elite who got too close to him and engaged the alien in CQC; he sidestepped the opponent's downward smash and retaliated with a strong right elbow to its ribcage.

'_Alpha, Tango, Whiskey... Niner, Niner, Tree. Coordinates received. Fire mission in effect Blue leader._' Command affirmed Mark as he jumped back from the Elite's follow up attack of a horizontal lash. Mark returned with another right elbow but this time to its mug, connecting with its split jaw before he followed up instinctively with a left uppercut with the nose of his rifle and a kick to its stomach before he thrust the rifle into its mouth and pulled the trigger three times; purple blood splattering against his armor, gun and visor.

'_Blue leader, this is Viper. Fire mission in effect. ETA thirty seconds. Recommend safe distance of two-hundred-feet. Over._' Rang into his ear as he threw his empty DMR at a charging Grunt, unholstered his sidearm -a common marine pistol- and lodging three slugs into the eyes of three more Grunts. "Copy last Viper." Mark finally replied running back to Tyler then off with his squad mate back into the rubble from whence they had come from.

"Mark, if there were snipers then why didn't they shoot us at all

just now?" Tyler asked his CO as they heard over the radio that Viper was coming in hot. Up until now Mark had not thought about the Jackal snipers at all and in fact he had dismissed them as figments just now since they had not even took potshots at him or Tyler and he could count at least three times just recently that himself, Tyler, or both of them could have been taken down by the sharpshooters alone.

"I don't know Tyler." He said back to his friend as he heard the sounds of Hornets buzz right in and open fire at the coordinates given to them. It was then that Mark and Tyler both heard the distinct sounds of Beam Rifles go off. Naturally, both men looked out from their cover to see what they had shot at. What they saw would have made anybody else cringe or even angry but not these fearless Spartans. No, instead of cringing or looking away both watched as two of the three Hornets were struck and went plummeting right down into the very fireballs they created from the salvo of missiles they had launched. Mark and Tyler watched the metal birds go up in flames, tear apart and explode. They even listened to the terrified screams of the unlucky marines before the static set in only for a moment.

"Shit! Shit! Shit!" Mark cussed and slammed his fist down onto the rubble. Tyler looked at his friend for a split second before his eyes caught the glimpse of a blue electricity field spark into existence then fade with a loud, ear-deafening pop.

"Rico, visual now!" Tyler yelled out sternly, opening fire on the honor guards that marched towards him and Mark. Shaking his head, Mark opened fire with his pistol as well while the Elites all brandished their energy swords and began running at the two soldiers.

Having watched the entire scene that just took place Rico had also slammed his fist down when he watched two of the three Hornets go down in flames but his anger faded rather quickly and turned into revenge the minute he saw the blue field dissipate. Now through his scope he could see what only Mark and Tyler had once been able to see. Four shots rang out; one right after the other. Four Elites fell to the ground, their orange armor now tainted by purple. Mark and Tyler were ecstatic as they together dropped only two Elites prior to the four consecutive shots.

"Tyler, ready?" Mark asked prepping to run at the remaining three honor guards. He saw energy swords only four-feet in front of him and Tyler and planned to grab at least one of them and enter melee combat. Now Tyler had also seen the dropped energy swords and knew right then Mark was planning on engaging the Elite honor guards in sword combat with their own weapons but what he hadn't planned for himself was that since the cloaking had been removed also meant they had just sent out a nice big warning flag to any immediate Covenant ships that may have been patrolling the skies or even space. His thoughts were pushed aside the second he heard four more consecutive shots ring out; watching the last three Elites drop like flies.

"We'd better hurry up here Mark. I know those Wraiths are still around—" Tyler went on to say before seeing two big balls of blue light fly through the air and strike twenty-feet before him and Mark, the explosion alone sending tremors through the ground forcing the two to keep their balance and cover their eyes from the bright light

the plasma emitted. "-Fuck me!"

"Dammit. Let's go Tyler. Should be simple now that the infantry are done for." Mark told him running straight ahead to re-enter the field and go for the tanks but that was when he was once more reminded of the real danger that lurked among the rubble. Two beams of violet struck him; one in his right breast and one in his left thigh. Both hits diminished his shield to fifteen percent and caused him to hit the ground and roll into cover, the third beam missing him by an inch. The snipers, to his dismay, were still alive and well.

"Hey Mark, I think you have friends still." Tyler laughed over the com to Mark as he ran up ducking behind cover across from where Mark was now hiding to let his shield recharge.

"Har, har Tyler. Shut up and get a bead on them!" Mark yelled out hoping Rico would pick up on the positions of the Jackals as well and deal with them before the Wraiths dealt with him and Tyler.

Rico shook his head at hearing Mark demand the snipers to be taken out and since he had seen where the shots had originated he figured it'd been easy to follow the trail right back to them but that was shot down when he saw there were no snipers, just blank canvas.

"Fuck me Mark okay?" He replied back, "There ain't shit. They must be covered by another cloaking field or something." He reported before lifting his head from his scope to the sound of something hovering. He looked to his left to see a Phantom lowering from the air until it was level with him then it turned to its side. The hatch opened and a firing squad of black armored Grunts now stared him down. They were Spec Ops and their fuel rod cannons were aimed right at him. "Oh shit!" He screamed jumping to his feet and running backwards dragging his sniper rifle with him.

'_Oh shit!_' Played over all of Blue team's COM links followed by a loud explosion. Mark and Tyler both saw the bright green clouds off in the distance where Rico had been. "Rico? Rico!" Mark shouted as he and Tyler both watched the building collapse. "Rico, report!" He demanded, "Report!" Nothing. Static followed by a soft click that resembled a phone call ending.

"No. No you goddamn alien bastards!" Tyler screamed running out of cover and opening fire in the direction of the snipers with the last magazine of DMR rounds he had. On his HUD he had pinpointed them shortly after they revealed themselves by shooting and hitting Mark so now that the three red dots were still there he could see they were behind cover.

"Tyler! Tyler, get back here!" Mark shouted watching him walking steadfast and shooting still, "Tyler, get your ass back here immediately. That's a goddamn order!" He screamed angrily this time at his comrade.

"Fuck them all Mark! Fuck them all!" Tyler replied back listening to his gun go dry. He threw it down and picked up a nearby fuel rod. He was in luck because it still had five rounds in it and it had not self detonated like most others might have, a downfall that was about to mean the end of the snipers. "See you in hell Jackals!" He yelled out before arcing up at a fifty degree angle and opening fire with

two shots then he arced his shot up to a one-seventy-five degree angle and let out two more shots. After four shots he watched them all fly through the air, arcing down and striking the debris. He watched as one red blip faded. This meant he had killed one of the snipers and now only two remained. After seeing where the last two shots had hit he arced himself once more and pulled the trigger one last time launching the final round from the barrel and out at the enemies, compensating by adding an extra five degrees to the upward angle so that either way he'd make the shot even if it meant collapsing the roof over their heads in the process.

"Goodnight assholes." He laughed watching the green orb explode, the building shake and crumble and the last two dots fading from his visor. "Targets eliminated." He confirmed. Mark ran up beside him and slapped him on the shoulder.

"Tyler, you ever do that again and you will be running two-hundred laps around Sword Base five times over. Am I clear?" Mark spoke to Tyler not in an angered tone but a joking tone with a serious vibe to it. He wasn't really mad at Tyler for what he just done because in his own way Mark would have done the exact same thing. Actually, Mark was going to run out opening fire and picking up the fuel rod cannon that Tyler had grabbed but Tyler had beat him to it.

"Copy that sir." Tyler replied back with a chortle, slapping Mark's shoulder as well. "Now can we get this mission over with? I'm starved." He commented. Mark laughed and shook his head.

"Sure." Mark said looking up and seeing the Wraiths fleeing. Tyler saw them fleeing too because he made a smart remark.

"Guess they hate being ass-fucked without lube."

Mark laughed again, shook his head and patted Tyler's shoulder before turning away and making a call. "Blue leader to Blue Three come in. Over."

'_Blue Three here. Go ahead Blue leader._'

"LZ is secure. I repeat: LZ is cold. Convoy is to continue. Over."

'_Copy that Blue leader. Blue Three and Four will move up with convoy. Destination same, LZ X-ray. See you in ten. Out._'

"Ughâ€|" Rico laid there on his back, right leg twisted backwards with rubble over it and left arm above his head while his right arm laid across his stomach and his left leg was straightened out with the foot pointing up. He was dazed and couldn't move. Opening his eyes as much as he could he saw pitch black followed by impaired hearing. His HUD was letting off warning sirens and flashing words ran over his visor in five rows: shield failure, oxygen systems damaged and offline, armor lock in effect; impact gel released, distress beacon offline. These warnings were preceded by warnings of his actual person: physical damage estimated sixty-five percent; right leg shattered, left arm broken, two ribs crushed, minor internal lacerations.

"F-uck." He managed to let out as his body began to regain some of its feeling and the muffled hearing fading away. He still couldn't

believe he was alive and when he finally managed to move his right arm, even if it was painful to do and little at a time, he eventually managed to press his hand to his throat just under his Mark V helmet and speak. "Override command: release helmet." On command the sirens ended and the flashy warnings ceased, rewritten by a single line of text: _Override command: helmet release approved_. After the command was given Rico heard pressure release and the helmet lose its taut grip on his head and neck then it became easy to maneuver so he pushed it up over his head, closing his eyes upon the rays of light hitting them as the helmet fell off the top of his head completely. "Owwâ€œ! Damn that is hella bright." He remarked opening his eyes again as the pupils got used to the rays. He looked around him as best he could without moving any part of his body but his head and saw through his hazel-colored eyes that he was ground level in the very building he had been perched up in playing Overwatch then he looked down at his broken leg and saw a good, heavy chunk of rubble sitting on top of it. "Dammit. That's going to put me out of commission for awhile." He sighed before he coughed and spit up blood. "Shit. Minor internal bleeding on top of a broken leg, broken arm, ribsâ€œ! At least I'm not deadâ€œ! Yet."

Forcing himself to sit up was harder than he had figured it'd be but again he was in luck because his rifle was next to him and he had grabbed it and used it as a sort of crutch to level himself up. Once he did that he began attempting to push the debris off his broken leg but failed when he spit up more blood and fell back down onto his back heaving and coughing. Rico was stubborn though and was not about to die in that hole much less from bodily injuries so he grabbed his sniper rifle again and did a quick check of it to see if it had been damaged or not in the explosion and trip down thirteen floors. After a review he saw it had been minimally damaged at best and after pulling back the bolt with ease, knew internally it was still fine plus he still had a shot in the chamber.

"Lady Luck, I owe you a very nice and expensive fish dinner with the finest wine money can buy." He said to himself aiming the rifle out at the hole where the setting sunlight was coming in through. "This is going to hurt." He told himself as he prepared himself for the recoil that was to come the moment he pulled the trigger. "Oneâ€œ! Twoâ€œ! Three." He counted off to himself then he took in a slow breath and exhaled as he pulled the trigger all the way back. The shot rang out and the butt of the weapon slammed down into his already bruised, beaten & battered injured right shoulder before hitting the ground when he let it go from the sheer shock of pain. "Dammit!" He howled out of agony. "Please guys, find me. I don't want to die here." He prayed before closing his eyes and forcing himself to steady his breathing as best he could even while spitting up blood more and more every few seconds.

The convoy had just arrived at Landing Zone X-ray when Mark and Tyler finished up tallying a total estimated Covenant casualties of around one-hundred-and-ten and now both Mark and Tyler were walking up to the convoy that was made up of three UNSC Warthogs; the two leads carrying an MG50 machine gunner, behind them were five troop transport Warthogs; all filled with marines and two blue Spartans, then picking up the rear was one Scorpion tank that had four extra marines riding on its sides.

"Good to see you made here in one piece Blue Three, Blue Four." Mark greeted both Spartans as they walked up to him and Tyler. The two

Spartans nodded back to him and stood at ease. Unlike Mark and Tyler who both stood at six-foot, five these soldiers stood at only six-foot, two and had a more feminine appearance to their armor. Their chest was shaped like that of a female and their frames were thinner than that of Mark or Tyler.

"Same to you sir." Blue Three replied back lifting up her shotgun and resting it on her right shoulder.

"Mark, any word on Rico at all?" Blue Four asked holstering her assault rifle on her back.

Mark looked between Tyler and both girls then sighed. "No we have not Victoria. Not since his position was attacked." He told her grimly. She looked down and sighed.

"Okay. I say we go recon his position then." She suggested looking back up and waving over the lead Warthog. It drove up beside her then the three marines dismounted it and walked off to help with whatever the rest were doing.

"Good idea Victoria." Mark commended, nodding his head. "Haley and Tyler you two get out to Rico's LKP and see if you can find him. Report back with anything at all. Get going." He ordered them. Tyler and Haley saluted Mark then hopped into the vehicle; Tyler riding gunner and Haley driving. Once they were off in the distance he looked back at Victoria. "So what all happened on your trek here?" He asked her.

"A shit load, Mark. The five miles we had to drive took longer than expected. We encountered heavy resistance at Checkpoint Alpha, two miles out of the FOB then after that it was scattered, guerilla ambushes. I am just glad we didn't have any casualties. I can't say the same for the Covenant." She reported to him, answering his question.

Mark nodded as he took in all she told him. "I see. Well you're here now so we can begin making this area ours again and this time hold it better than last."

"Agreed Mark. Last time They overlooked the might of the Covenant but amazingly they learned from their mistakes and even took the advice of their tactics genius. This convoy is just the beginning. We will have five more Scorpions joining this LZ at 0250 followed by a hundred more marines, four squads of Hornets and the beginnings of a checkpoint base equipped with turrets to deal with anything they may throw at us here tomorrow before 1500."

"Well the Covenant have gotten smarter themselves I have to give them that, Victoria." Mark told her looking around at the battlefield. "They were using cloaking relays, not your average tower ones either. They somehow managed to condense that technology down into something like their weapon storage crates."

"Really? Well can't say we wouldn't have expected such a feat from our greatest enemy." She laughed back with him, also agreeing that the Covenant earned credit for their new ploy.

"Let's just hope we were lucky today and made it out alive with no casualties -including no Spartan MIAs."

"Agreed." Victoria nodded before walking off.

"Blue leader to Blue Two, come in. Over."

"If this thing went any slower we'd both be home by nightfall tomorrow." Tyler cracked to Haley as he rounded fully with the turret as he kept his eyes on their surroundings while Haley drove them to Rico's position.

Haley laughed. "I know, I know. You'll get over it though."

"Yeah, yeah. Smartass."

"You said it, not me Tyler." She retorted with a giggle.

'_Blue leader to Blue Two, come in. Over_' Rang loud in his ear. Tyler stopped spinning in the turret and looked ahead again. "Blue Two here. Go ahead Blue leader. Over."

'_What's it looking like out there?_' He heard Mark ask. Tyler laughed. "Deserted sir. Nothing but dust, smoke and destruction as far as the eye can see." He reported back.

'_Any sign of Blue Five yet?_'

"No sir. We are about five-hundred meters and closing to Rico's LKP. Terrain out here isn't exactly speedway friendly, sir."

'_Copy that Blue Two. Stay in touch. Out._'

"What'd he want?" Haley asked Tyler through her COM link.

"Daddy's making sure we're okay." Was Tyler's response, a laugh being thrown in with it.

Haley giggled back. "That's good I guess. He ask about Rico?"

"Yeah. Told him we weren't there yet due to the road. I don't think he bought it."

"Haha. I'm sure he did Tyler. Mark knows better. We'll find Rico though." She assured Tyler and herself although her heart was hurting just from the thought of Rico being dead.

Rico opened his eyes again and looked around himself. In the past ten minutes he had managed to pull himself over to an opening that led outside of the downed building he was in but that alone caused him grief so now he sat with his back against the wall holding his stomach and trying not to pass out again. After heaving and grimacing in pain he spit then licked his chapped lips. With his pistol in hand he looked out the hole and saw nothing but wasteland and lifelessness.

"It'll be night soon. Great and I am currently believed to be KIA-well, MIA- since we Spartans are never really _killed in action_." He reminded himself and just as he was about to look away he heard the faint whirring of an engine followed by something heavy hitting the ground. "It couldn't be, could it?" He asked himself looking out again to confirm his thoughts or imagination. Sure enough his

thoughts were correct. He saw a Warthog fly through the air and slam into the ground and it was heading right for him, or at least his general area. This brought a smile to his face and he aimed his pistol out at a downward angle then pulled the trigger three times; firing three bullets off. He knew it'd be heard and get their attention so now he just had to wait.

Haley and Tyler both heard three loud rings and stopped the vehicle. "Did you hear that Tyler?" She asked him.

"I did Haley. It came from the building there." He replied back looking out at the destroyed building from which Rico was stationed. "That only means one thing Haley. Get driving!" He yelled.

"Don't have to tell me twice." She said back hitting the gas and driving full speed for Rico.

"They did hear me. Good." Rico told himself as he began to crawl out of the hole, dragging behind him his broken right leg and left arm. He brought his sniper rifle with him even though it was empty. He loved that rifle like it was part of him, which is was since he had trained most his life to become a sharpshooter and in that training he was taught repeatedly that the sniper rifle was not just some mere piece of equipment that was meant to save his life or the lives of others, but that it was an actual part of him and to treat it like he'd treat himself no matter what condition he or it was in so he did just that even if he was dragging it now by having his broken leg wrapped around it while his other leg wrapped about it too. "Over here!" He yelled out hoarsely, coughing and spitting. He raised his pistol into the air and fired off three more shots just so the transport didn't accidentally run him over.

"Holy shit Haley!" Tyler exclaimed when he saw the sight of familiar blue armor.

"It's Rico!" Haley screamed with joy. She stopped the Warthog and jumped out of the driver's seat, running right for Rico as Tyler followed hot on her heels. "Rico!" She yelled hitting her knees.

Rico laughed and dropped his pistol then looked up at his comrades. "Hey there. Care to help your favorite Mexican out?" He asked them both with a smug grin and dirty, matted black hair that came down to his ears. Both Haley and Tyler laughed at their friend's joke about himself then nodded to him.

"You don't look so bad for falling a few hundred feet." Tyler commented teasingly. Rico laughed then coughed up more blood and exhaled heavily.

"Oh no. You've got internal hemorrhaging." Haley identified.

"Yeah. That as well as a broken arm, two ribs and a shattered leg." Rico added in for her and Tyler's pleasure. "Now can we go home? I need a shower, warm meal and a dirty martini."

"Rico, I'll buy you three dirty martinis and whatever other drinks you like." Tyler promised him, watching Haley pull out a can from her right thigh compartment then rolling Rico onto his back.

"Ahh, dammit. Get me out of this tin can." Rico cried as his body jolted with sharp pains and shocks. Tyler kneeled down on his other side and began feeling around Rico's midsection of his armor until he found a weak spot then he pulled out something that resembled a welders torch from his leg compartment and pushed it into the spot he found. Rico arched with pain and cried out then he felt his armor depressurize and loosen up, splitting at the seams. Tyler pulled the top half off and set it aside.

"Okay Rico, hang on. We got you." Haley said to him as she pressed the nose of the can into his gut. That made him cry and arch as well then he felt something entering his stomach. At first it was cold and felt like foam then seconds later it lost its cold sensation and seemed to evaporate, which was not the case as Haley pulled the nose of the can from his gut and tossing it aside. A white plaster oozed out of the injection place and hardened immediately into a beige/cream color.

"Okay Haley, help me lift him up." Tyler told her wrapping his arm under Rico's head and back, trying not to hurt his broken arm too much. Haley followed his lead then on the count of three they lifted him up and out of the back part of his armor. Tyler pulled the armor out from behind Rico and set it next to the front portion then he took his torch-look alike and found the weak points on Rico's legs and waist then hit them to loosen them and remove them piece-by-piece. Once Tyler had pulled off the top half of his pal's lower body armor he and Haley lifted Rico up and slowly carried him over to the Warthog, setting him down into the passenger seat as carefully as they could, though that ended well afterwards with Rico cussing up a storm and damning every alien he hated including anything else he hated.

"At least you're alive." Haley reminded Rico.

"Rico, where's your helmet?" Tyler asked after Rico calmed down.

"Inside the debris there." Rico answered with a nod towards the building he came from. "Be careful though. That place could come down at any moment." He warned Tyler as Tyler was already running to the building. "He's an idiot."

Haley laughed and looked back at Rico through her helmet. "He is, but his idiocy has saved your life a few times don't forget."

Tyler climbed back out of the hole minutes later with a damaged blue helmet in hand and ran back to the pile of armor parts. He set the helmet on top of the rest then pulled out a small vial-looking thing and twisted the tip then set it down in the center of the pile so that the helmet was on top of it before he ran back to the vehicle, hopped up into the back with the turret and waved them off. "Let's go!" He ordered. Haley hit the gas and spun the Warthog around and headed back in the direction of the LZ. Behind them several explosions sounded and lit up a marvelous blue and white color before burning a deep and dark green. All the damaged Mark V armor was destroyed completely.

End
file.